The Interstate Compact

On Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Current as of September 2011

Providing policy, tools, and resources to further enhance the quality of life of service members and their families.

Module 1

Interstate Compact Overview

Presenter's Name
Presenter's Contact Information

Date

This information is provided by the Department of Defense in collaboration with the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission.

Objectives

- To provide background on the Compact and an overview of its provisions
- To discuss the status of Compact implementation and the role of school liaisons (SLs) in helping children of military families navigate school transitions and realize the benefits of the Compact

Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment

- **Issue:**
  Frequent moves = many schools with non-standard policies = educational delays

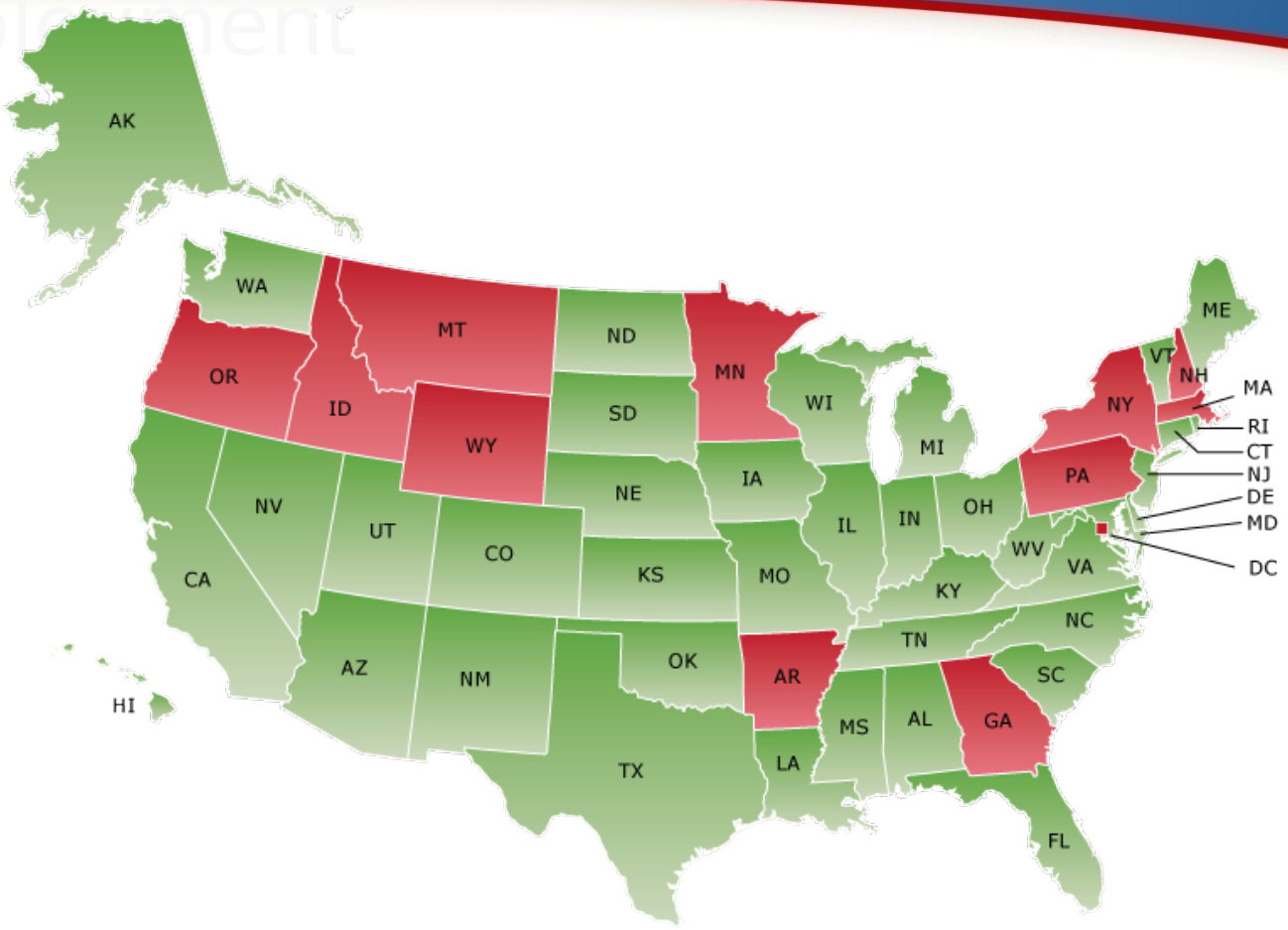
- **Goal:**
  States participate in an *interstate compact* providing a uniform policy to resolve challeng military children face moving between school systems

Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment

Background

- 2006: DoD & Council of State Governments collaboration
  - Gathered input from 18 stakeholders
- November 2007: Fully coordinated 'Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children'
  - Provides procedural policies for enrollment, placement/attendance, eligibility, & graduation
- Legislative process to adopt the Compact…once adopted, it is a binding contract
- Adopting states established an Interstate Commission composed of one representative from each member state to oversee implementation/compliance

Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment



39 member states cover the majority of our military students.

What Does the Compact Actually Do?

Article I: Purpose

Article II: Definitions

Article III: Applicability

Article IV: Enrollment

Article V: Placement and Attendance

Article VI: Eligibility

Article VII: Graduation

Article VIII: State Coordination

Article IX: Interstate Commission

Article IV – Enrollment: Educational Records

What's included:

- Parents can receive a copy of unofficial records (definition of "complete set" to be determined by the Interstate Commission)
- Receiving school must accept the unofficial records to enroll and place the student pending reception of official records
- Sending school must send official records within ten business days (except for any school break) of receiving a request from the receiving school

What's not covered:

- Receiving unofficial records free of charge
- Giving parents the right to request a copy of ever student file

Article IV - Enrollment: Immunizations

What's included:

- Child is given thirty calendar days from enrollment to obtain required immunizations
- A series of immunizations must be started within thirty calendar days of enrollment

What's not covered:

- TB testing: since it is a test rather than an immunization, the test may be required before enrollment

Article IV - Enrollment: Kindergarten and First Grade Entrance Age

What's included:

- A student can continue in the same grade in the receiving state regardless of entrance age requirements, if he/she has already started kindergarten or 1st grade in an accredited school in the sending state in which the family was stationed
- A student may go to the next grade regardless of age requirements, if he/she has completed kindergarten or 1st grade in the sending state

What's not covered:

- A student who has not been enrolled even though he/she was eligible to enroll

Article V - Placement and Attendance: Course and Educational Program Placement

What's included:

- Receiving state will initially honor placement based on the student's enrollment in the sending state
- Receiving state *may* subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment

What's not covered:

- Guarantee of continued enrollment if not qualified
- Although the receiving school must demonstrate reasonable accommodation, there is no requirement to create a course

Article V - Placement and Attendance: Special Education Services

What's included:

- Receiving state will initially provide the same services identified in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) from the sending state
- Receiving state may subsequently perform an evaluation to ensure the appropriate placement of the student

What's not covered:

- A requirement to provide the exact programs as sending state
- Anything above the requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

Article V - Placement and Attendance: Placement Flexibility

What's included:

- Allowing flexibility to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to waive course or program prerequisites or other preconditions if simil course work has been completed in another LEA

What's not covered:

- Mandatory waivers of prerequisites or preconditions

Article V - Placement and Attendance: Absence Related to Deployment Activities

What's included:

- Flexibility for additional excused absenc to visit the parent or legal guardian before, during, or immediately after deployment

What's not covered:

- Requiring more than "reasonable accommodation"

Note: Some states may not excuse absences during state testing or if the student has already missed so much school that additional absences will be detrimental.

Article VI – Eligibility: Eligibility for Enrollment

What's included:

- LEA cannot charge tuition to military children placed in care of a non-custodial parent or person serving "in loco parentis"
- A student can continue to attend his/her current school even if living with a non-custodial parent or person serving "in loco parentis"
- The power of attorney for guardianship is sufficient for enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation or consent

What's not covered:

- Situations where a move is within a state; the Compact only covers moves between member states and during deployment

Article VI – Eligibility: Eligibility for Extracurricular Participation

What's included:

- Providing **opportunity** for inclusion in extracurricular activities regardless of deadlines as long as the child is otherwise qualified

What's not covered:

- State student athletic associations, some of which are not affiliated with states or LEAs
- Although the receiving school must demonst[illegible] accommodation, there is no requirement to hold open or create additional spaces

Article VII – Graduation

What's included:

- Waiving courses required for graduation if similar course work has been completed in another LEA
- Flexibility in accepting sending state exit or end of course exams, national achievement tests, or alternative testing in lieu of testing requirements for graduation in the receiving state
- Allowing a student to receive a diploma from the sending school as an alternative to accommodations for exit exams and graduation requirements that the student doesn't have time to meet

Article VII – Graduation

What's not covered:

- Mandatory course waivers, although LEA must show good cause for a waiver denial
- Mandatory waiver of the exam or acceptance of alternative results
- The right for parents to request a change of graduation requirements (# of math units) in the receiving LEA

Summary

- Interstate Compact has tremendous **potential** to assist our children as they move from school to school
- Compact implementation will be neither quick nor entirely uniform
  - *Requires strong advocacy to overcome inertia*
- Best advocates will be knowledgeable parents supported by active military school liaisons and the Military Representatives to the State Councils

The Compact provides a valuable tool to help our families!

Providing policy, tools, and resources to further enhance the quality of life of service members and their families.